

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

PART B

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

JULY 1, 2002 – JUNE 30, 2003

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March 23, 2004

**Ms Gwendolyn A. Gage
Management and Program Analyst
Monitoring and State Improvement Planning Division
Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education
Mary E. Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW, Room 3617
Washington, DC 20202-2640**

RE: Part B Annual Performance Report 7/1/02-6/30/03

Dear Ms. Gage:

**Enclosed is an original and three copies of the Rhode Island Annual Performance Report (APR)
Covering the grant year July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003.**

Sincerely,

**Thomas P. DiPaola, Ph.D.
Director of Special Populations**

**TPD:pdp
Enclosures**

RHODE ISLAND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

MARCH 31, 2004

JULY 1, 2004 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2003

INTRODUCTION

The State of Rhode Island has a long and proud history of being responsive to the education of all children including children with disabilities. In 1963 Rhode Island's General Assembly commissioned a study of the needs of children with disabilities which resulted in special education regulations to ensure that children would receive services designed to meet their unique needs. Most recently, in 1997, Rhode Island implemented School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT) which established requirements that hold schools and districts accountable for the performance of all children including children with disabilities. As a result Rhode Island has been well-positioned to respond to the accountability for student performance requirements in the IDEA 1997 and the NCLBA of 2002.

Rhode Island instituted its Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) with a comprehensive Self-Assessment which was completed in December 2001. The Self-Assessment became the basis for Rhode Island's State Improvement Plan (RISIP) for Special Education which was submitted to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on June 26, 2002.

The Annual Performance Report addresses both the IDEA '97 student performance requirements and the progress made toward the goals that were set forth in our State Improvement Plan.

As a result of and guided by these efforts, Rhode Island's data demonstrate:

- >An improving graduation rate and decreasing dropout rate for children with disabilities.
- >A significant increase in the participation of children with disabilities in the RI State Assessment Program.
- >An improvement in the performance of children with disabilities in the State Assessment.
- >An increase in the percentage of preschool children with disabilities being educated with their non-disabled peers.
- >Improvements in Rhode Island's ability to collect, analyze and use its data systems.
- >Improvements in the participation of parents and family members at all levels of decision-making.
- >A systemic ability to resolve disputes that arise between school departments and parents.
- >A statewide continuous improvement of monitoring system that focuses on student results and procedural compliance.

RI also has identified challenges on which it will continue to focus improvement efforts to:

- >Ensure that children with disabilities are identified and receive appropriate services in the Least Restrictive Environment.
- >Use data to guide improvement efforts.
- >Work collaboratively with state and local agencies to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

Rhode Island has developed its Improvement Plan on a sound foundation of identified needs and continues to make progress to ensure that children with disabilities experience improved results while in school and improved outcomes as they leave school and move into adult life.